

Series I  
Correspondence,  
1932-1973

Box 3, Folder 20

January 6, 1961 -  
March 20, 1961

0573

Dear Wicksey, 10 July 1961  
Comment on Newport affairs

Admiral Austin, 5 July 1961  
Comment on Global Strategy Discussions

Dear Admiral Nimitz, 16 June 1961  
Discussion of Battle Evaluation Group  
See also June 1 letter

Dear John (Brown), 23 January 1961  
Copy of letter from Henry Wriston to J. N. Brown re Bates

Dear Mick (Carney), 30 January 1961  
Comments on Leyte Gulf, Halsey, Nimitz and film on  
John Paul Jones

Dear Claiborne (Senator Pell), 24 January 1961  
Comments on his election to Senate

Dear Arleigh Burke, 6 January 1961  
Comment on Secretary McNamara and Connally

0574

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
January 6, 1961

Dear Arleigh:

The other night I was talking with John Nicholas Brown and he asked me what my reaction was to the new soon-to-be Secretary of the Navy. I told him that I didn't know too much about it but that he seemed to be purely a political appointment, since he was so closely associated with the soon-to-be Vice President.

Mr. Brown said that he had expected that answer because that was the general opinion. However, he said he wished to correct my viewpoint in this matter and any viewpoint I might have about the new soon-to-be Secretary of Defense, Mr. McNamara. He then went on to say that he had it on very good authority, in fact top-flight authority, that Mr. McNamara accepted this assignment as Secretary of Defense with two basic agreements with the soon-to-be President Kennedy. These were (a) that no one would be appointed to any high office in the Department of Defense without McNamara's direct and personal approval and (b) that he would not be requested to make changes in the Department of Defense until he had been there one year. Parenthetically speaking, I think that what Mr. McNamara meant was that the Department of Defense would not originate new ideas, but of course the Congress is another thing.

Mr. Brown went on to say that when Mr. McNamara was issued this invitation to be the Secretary of Defense, he went to Henry Ford the II and told him of his almost dilemma in that he had just become President of the Ford Motor Company and he felt obligated to them. Mr. Ford, and this shows his "bigness", said that he would hate to lose him but that the job of Secretary of Defense was of vital importance today and that he gave him a free hand to make his decision without future prejudice.

Based on the above and on the further fact that Mr. Brown said there is every reason to believe that the appointment of John B. Connally, Jr., far from being political, was entirely based on merit and that he, McNamara, expected

0575

exactly that out of Mr. Connally, I thought it important enough to tell to Vice Admiral (Count) Austin on New Year's Day. He advised that I tell you.

It is very probable, of course, that you know about it, but if you don't it might be worthwhile information.

With best regards to you for a magnificent job well done for your beloved Navy and even more beloved Country I am with best wishes for the New Year, as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Admiral Arleigh Burke  
Chief of Naval Operations  
Pendagon Building  
Washington, D. C.

0576

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
January 9, 1961

Dear Ambassador Bishop:

This letter is to confirm the agreement which you very kindly made relative to the Quendecim Club. We are very happy to know that you have agreed to speak before the Club on Tuesday evening, January 17th.

As you know, we meet at 6:30 in the Muenchinger-King Hotel and the whole affair breaks up before 2200. Since the world is at great unrest, the timeliness of your subject can only be attested to by its title, "Some Recollections of Southeast Asia" or words to that effect.

New Subject—I still believe that Admiral Ingersoll's letter, to which we were honored to listen to, would be better if he deleted two or three lines. It would still contain everything he wanted to say without any possible kick-back. However, it is a good letter and does express a view.

With many thanks for your kindness and looking forward to seeing you long before the 17th I am,  
as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

The Honorable Max Bishop  
U. S. Naval War College  
Newport, Rhode Island

0577

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
January 11, 1961

Gentlemen:

I want to thank you very much for your letter relative to the two books which I ordered. Unfortunately, one of the books I referred to in my letter as the "Age of War" when it is in fact the "Edge of War". The other one was not "American Myth and Soviet Myth" but rather "American Might and Soviet Myth".

I now wish to purchase two additional books. I wish two copies of the "Common Sense Book of Wine" by Leon D. Adams and one copy of "The People's Padre", author unknown.

The latter book was written by a Roman Catholic priest—I believe a Franciscan monk who eventually quit the church and headed a big hospital in Arizona. This book is rather difficult to get but I saw some copies of it in Kansas. This is merely a lead but I am pretty sure you are familiar with the book and it is not unlikely that you have at least one on your confidential shelf.

I did read that article about Frank Bridget and, believe it or not, I didn't realize that he was connected with you. Evidently, he was a fine man and performed a distinguished service. It is a wonderful thing that the Marine Colonel saw fit to publish this. I am glad that you are happy about it.

With best regards I am,

In haste,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Newbegins Book Shop  
358 Post Street  
San Francisco 8, California

Attention: Charlotte Bridget

0578

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
January 13, 1961

Dear Judge:

In my last letter to you I told you I would keep you informed of my movements in regard to the Leyte project.

I had planned to be in New York this week and I made arrangements to go to New York, but I did not want to do so until I could contact Mr. Barnett. Mr. Barnett happened to be away and only returned yesterday. He is suffering from a heavy cold. I talked to him on the telephone for quite awhile about this whole affair. He seems to be quite interested in it but he now says that I will have to get to the top man with the Foundations. He said in the Richardson Foundation he ranks about a Second Lieutenant.

He has asked me to see him in New York later in the month, which I plan to do. I was surprised at the way he spoke regarding his own position. He said I must know that the heads of these Foundations operate exactly as if they were either Four Star Generals and Admirals and are quite difficult of access, unless you have the proper start. That was the reason he said to get a letter from Admiral Burke or the Secretary of the Navy. I told him that he sounded quite different to me from how he had sounded before—to which he replied that he still was very friendly about the project but still felt that the whole matter started without a proper source letter, shall we say. I told him that the source letter I would have would be from you and he thought perhaps that would be enough—so will you write me a letter somewhat similar to the letters you wrote to both Barnett and Weeks, giving me power to speak for the Chief of History?

I think that once I get started on this thing, I will get in to see one or two of the top people and perhaps get in to see the people that both Dr. Wriston and Mr. Barnett recommends. Both of them seem to recommend Dr. Perkins of the Carnegie Foundation, who you can find in "Who's Who". According to Mr. Barnett, Dr. Perkins was on the Symington Task Force which drew up those somewhat strange recommendations recently. I am planning to discover some way of approaching these people to obtain their views. When I spoke to Dr. Wriston about a year ago, he said "don't let them give you a flat no because that gets around very quickly, instead kind of sound them out"—which is exactly what I was doing with Barnett.

0579

In this latter case, Mr. Barnett said the Richardson Foundation is not the one referred to in the paper the other day as being four hundred million strong. He said, actually they are infinitely smaller and their yearly income is six hundred thousand dollars, largely used in education in North Carolina. He then went on to say the Ford Foundation had about eighty million yearly income and the Carnegie Foundation about thirteen million. He then went on to say further that he would talk to Mr. Richardson of the Richardson Foundation and see what interest he might have in the matter despite his relatively small yearly income.

I am mulling over in my mind now a letter to Dr. Wriston narrating what had happened before and asking his advice and for an appointment in New York. Dr. Barnett said a backing from Dr. Wriston would open almost any door.

And now I want to say I have a terrible cold myself and at the moment of dictation I am running a slight fever. I feel pretty good but I can well be worse, for the hospital told me today that if I didn't get better in a day or so, they were going to stick me in the hospital. I want you to know further that I caught this cold probably living too nice a life, but it seems to me that people that don't live a nice life never seem to have any trouble and those who have charming lives either get run over by a truck or catch cold from association with their friendly neighbors.

I certainly hope the New Year was good for you and your family. I had a fine time up here and I am not sorry that I am not in California. Christmas two years ago, the Navy sent me out to California because I had caught a cold just like this one and it did not go away. However, the California temperatures in the San Fernando Valley are lower than they are in Newport, i.e. 29°F. Today we are in the 30's.

If you have any thoughts in this matter, I shall be very happy to hear them. I am very anxious to get a favorable decision but whether favorable or not, I want a decision made pretty soon so that we will know what to do from there. Deo Volenti, we shall have it!

*Sacramento*  
Your old friend,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Rear Admiral E. M. Eller  
Chief of History, Main Navy  
Constitution Avenue  
Washington, D. C.

0580



12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
January 24, 1961

Dear Claiborne:

Now that you are formally seated in the Senate, I thought that I would seize this opportunity to tell you of how your friends feel about your success.

We are very proud of you and feel that you will ably discharge your duties as Senator, which, in these trying times are as important as they ever were. We watched you from the start. Many of us knew that you had senatorial ambitions but few of us ever expected that you would be nominated. This was because of the "state democratic machine" which, in my experience, has always hand picked its candidates and somehow controlled the elections.

We were right in this thought, for you were most certainly not the machine choice. But we were wrong in that we overlooked or downgraded seriously the possibility that the general public might react in your favor in the primary which, of course, they did and did handsomely. Thus, you became the "democratic nominee" which even the most die-hard Republicans—of which I am not one—realized and generally conceded was tantamount to election. And, of course, when the national elections occurred, you were swept into office by a very wide margin.

The wonder was—how did this happen?

To me, the answer is simple. The public was determined to send to Washington someone NEW — new in mind, new in spirit, new in hope and new in freedom from political entanglements. They had seen Roberts and McGrath in action and they had had enough of them—even for local office. You brought that something NEW into the campaign and, because of this, many Republicans voted for you. This makes you more than ever a representative of all Rhode Island.

But you brought something else into the campaign which, so far as I have observed, hasn't really been given weight in the post campaign comments. That was your faith in yourself, your evident great desire for the office, your evident integrity and your tenacity of purpose. It affected favorably practically everyone with whom you came in contact.

In this connection, I should like to quote here what Admiral Arleigh Burke (presently Chief of Naval Operations) wrote to me about one year ago relative to something that I have done—

0581

"I have found in this job that if somebody has a worthwhile idea and a willingness to work hard, his idea will come to the fore regardless of a lack of funds or other discouraging factors."

And in my opinion that is what happened in your case!  
Congratulations again!

With best wishes for your continued success in the Service of your Country I am, as ever

Cordially yours,

R. W. BATES  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Senator Claiborne Pell  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

0582

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
January 30, 1961

Dear Mick:

I am going to New York today to see if I can get a Foundation to support the completed study on the Battle for Leyte Gulf. I have been working on this for some time. I had some pretty good leads and advice, but both of the leads petered out because they weren't quite in a position to be of consequence.

I plan to see Dr. Wriston, head of the American Assembly and then Dr. Perkins of the Carnegie Foundation. After I have talked matters over with these two gentlemen, I will then know better whether I will be able to finish this work which we all know is of such importance.

I received a letter quoting a New York Times book review by Professor Robert G. Albion at Harvard, relative to the new book "Sea Power" by E. B. Potter, Chester W. Nimitz and others. In there it states, "In connection with the controversial "Bull's Run" at Leyte Gulf, for instance, it is remarked that part of the Japanese forces were able to escape 'because Halsey carried the main American surface force fruitlessly north and then south through the most critical hours of the battle, leaving inferior forces to deal with the enemy in two areas'".

I wonder if Admiral Nimitz had anything to do with this. I do know he is interested but the old gentleman has been taken in on several occasions—the last one of any importance being John Paul Jones. I tried to dissuade him from getting himself tied up with a film which I knew was based on incorrect information but he seemed startled to me. Of course after the New York Times had ripped the film apart and Sam Morison likewise, Nimitz realized he had been roughly handled. Admiral Nimitz is too kind, too understanding and too thoughtful, in my mind, to have been a party to these comments above referred to.

Since I have not seen the book, I cannot say too much but I think that any criticism of Admiral Halsey's operations as above described must have sufficient background information to support it or to explain it. That is what I was trying to do in writing my books, i.e. to present the background of decisions and then comment on the decisions based on that background. Too many people were too ready to criticize too many commanders with-

0583

out having any of the facts at all, except something happened. It is for this reason that I am hoping that I can get a Foundation to support my position in this matter—I hate to drop everything completely and so does Judge Eller who is behind me thoroughly in all of this.

If you happen to know any of the top men of the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation or the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation, I wish you would contact them for me and for the Chief of History to see if we can't arrive at an amicable arrangement.

The weather up here is very cold, slightly dry and, fortunately, with limited wind. Over in Connecticut, we have had as low as -27F in the Hartford area and here we have hovered around 0° most of the time.

With best regards to you and to Grace I am as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Admiral Robert B. Carney (ret.)  
1314 28th Street NW  
Washington 7, D. C.

0584

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
February 3, 1961

Gentlemen:

I am in receipt of your letter wherein you query me as to the application of Rear Admiral J. J. Clark for Non-Resident membership in the Club.

I am very happy to reply to your query as I have known Admiral Clark for quite a long time. I think that there is some mistake in your letter to me in that J. J. Clark, instead of being a Rear Admiral is a full Admiral Retired, i.e. four stars. I will now reply to your questionnaire categorically.

Item 1 — As pointed out above, I have known Admiral Clark for many years, since he and I served in the Navy, likewise, for many years and on many occasions our association has been very close.

Item 2 — As indicated under 1, my association has been both social and business, where the business was the business of the U. S. Navy.

Item 3 — I am not acquainted with any members of the applicant's family.

Item 4 — Admiral Clark is quite a man. He was a fine carrier task group commander in World War II and distinguished himself for his courageous conduct. He is friendly and personable.

Item 5 — I don't think he will use the Club much as his associations are largely in the New York-Washington area. At last reports, he was a director of the Alaska Air Lines, which may bring him through San Francisco from time to time.

Item 6 — I should think that Admiral Clark will help in the activities of the Club as best he can. I haven't heard of him as being much of an actor or musician; on the other hand, he may have inherent qualities which might well contribute greatly to the success of the Bohemian Club.

Comment—In writing the above, I have to say that I haven't been associated with Admiral Clark very recently. I have been re-

0585

tired for several years from the Navy and Admiral Clark has been retired more than that. However, I run across him on occasions in New York and he seems to have fine friends and to enjoy a fine reputation.

Sincerely,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Secretary, Membership Committee  
Bohemian Club  
624 Taylor Street  
San Francisco 2, California

0586

Miss. Barnes  
214900

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
February 10, 1961

Dear Admiral Barnum:

It was nice to talk to you on the phone, to be able to congratulate you upon your selection to Rear Admiral USNR and to have the friendly chat with you relative to my problem on completing my study on the Battle for Leyte Gulf.

As you perhaps know, my problem is based on the fact that the World War II Battle Evaluation Group of the Naval War College, which I had headed from 1946-1959, was dissolved 31 January 1959. At this time, we were analyzing the Battle for Leyte Gulf and had completed four of the seven planned volumes. The Chief of Naval History is very anxious to complete the remaining volumes and it is because of this that I am writing to you.

You may ask what is this all about and how does it concern me? Let me explain by giving you a background resume.

In 1946, upon the suggestion of the then Secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal, the World War II Battle Evaluation Group was established at the Naval War College by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), for the purpose of evaluating the naval battles of World War II in which the Naval Service participated. The title, method of presentation and format were left to the judgment of the Naval War College.

I was chosen by the then President of the Naval War College (Admiral Raymond A. Spruance) to head up this battle evaluation group, and I accepted because I wished not merely to produce a narrative of these battles (although this was a lesser included objective) but, more importantly, to study command decisions and from them to derive battle lessons for guidance in future warfare. It was agreed that I would confine my evaluations to four naval battles of the Western Pacific.

Based on the CNO's directive, I developed my own analytical method which, while distinctly unique, has met with the thorough approval of all of the Presidents of the Naval War College, and also with the various Chiefs of Naval Operations. By 1950, three battles, i.e. Coral Sea, Midway and Savo Island, had been evaluated and very important films were being made of each battle.

Also in 1950, upon the completion of the Battle for

0587

Savo Island, The Chief of Naval Operations directed that the Battle for Leyte Gulf be evaluated and suggested that I accomplish it. The President of the Naval War College therefore asked me to undertake this task. I accepted and continued to work on this battle until I retired 1 July 1958. (Actually, although retired, I worked until 31 January last year (1959) at which time as mentioned earlier the section was completely dissolved. Enclosure 1 shows the reaction of the Chief of Naval Operations to this special service.)

5 It was my original estimate that the study of this battle would and should require a total of seven volumes -- all monumental. This concept was approved by the then President of the Naval War College, Vice Admiral Lynde D. McCormick USN (Enclosure 2 shows the status of these volumes as of today. It will be observed that Volumes I, II, III and V have been completed; Volumes IV, VI, and VII have not been completed although some work has been done on Volumes VI and VII. Part of Volume IV has been included in Volume V for background. It will also be observed that it requires roughly two years plus to complete each volume once the project is fully underway).

9 I think that it is quite important that Volumes VI (the Battle off Samar) and VII (the Battle off Cape Engano) be completed for two major reasons. The first and foremost reason is to obtain battle lessons for future guidance; the second, is to provide in detail the true story of the battle. Certainly, one cannot obtain the former without the latter.

10 You may be interested in knowing why this evaluation was stopped. The Chief of Naval Operations in a letter to Admiral Richard L. Conolly (ret.), who had objected to the section's closure, stated that it was budgetary. However, there may have been other reasons as well.

11 Recently (Spring 1960 in Berkeley, California) and later (Fall 1960) here in Newport, Rhode Island, Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, USN expressed concern over the stoppage and authorized me to use his name in any way necessary to accomplish the completion of the evaluation. Also, among many others, Robert E. Carney (former Chief of Naval Operations and presently Chairman of the Board of the Bath Iron Works) who was Commander Third Fleet (Admiral William H. Halsey's Chief of Staff) in the Leyte Operation; and Rear Admiral Samuel E. Morison USNR the famous historian with whom I had most close contacts here, expressed similar views.

12 My work in battle evaluation and my films made such a favorable impression on Admiral Conolly who, as stated hereafter, is President of Long Island University, that his University awarded me the degree of Doctor of Letters in 1957.

13 So much for the background. My reason for coming to you is that I was advised by a lot of top educators and organization men that probably the best hope for accomplishing this Study would be with the U. S. Steel Foundation which, it is my understanding, has supported numerous projects of many types. I talked this over

0588



Bob Prodow in the New York Yacht Club and he also seemed to think that you were more than a straw to lean on.

15 I have talked about this and have the complete support, I feel quite sure, at present of Dr. Henry Wriston of the American Assembly presently located at Columbia University, of Admiral Richard L. Conolly, U.S.N. (ret.), President of Long Island University and formerly President of the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island and of Rear Admiral E. M. Eller, U.S.N., Chief of History at Washington, D. C.

16 It is of great interest to me that at the time this was folded, practically every officer of high estate supported me and could not understand how it was being stopped. One of these was Admiral Gerald Wright, who was Commander-In-Chief of the U. S. Atlantic Fleet and Supreme Allied Commander of the Atlantic; also, Admiral Felix Stump, the Commander-In-Chief of the Pacific Fleet was deeply concerned. I merely mention these to indicate that the completion of this work is considered by very, very many to be of extraordinary importance. Finally, it is my estimate that if we use the same staff that the Navy gave me at the Naval War College of four officers, in addition to myself, one chief quartermaster, one cartographer and several yeomen, it will cost about \$60,000 a year.

17 I stand ready and anxious to help explain anything necessary and if you desire that I appear in New York before your company, I shall be happy to do so.

18 If all goes well, I will be in New York presently and will call you, at which time, I hope you will be able to give me the general position of your great company.

19 Once again, congratulations on your success in both the military and civilian field. I think it augurs well for a very happy new year for you. With best regards and appreciation for your thoughtfulness in giving me your time I am, as ever

Yours sincerely,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Rear Admiral Robert Barnum, USNR  
U. S. Steel Corporation  
71 Broadway  
New York, New York

0589

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
February 14, 1960

Dear Judge:

Last week I was in New York visiting top men of top organizations concerning the possibility of financial support for the continued study of the Battle for Leyte Gulf. I had conversations with (1) Dr. Henry Wriston of the American Assembly, (2) through him to the Rockefeller Foundation, (3) the Carnegie Foundation, (4) the Assistant to the President of United States Steel, Mr. Robert Barnum, (5) the Chairman of the Board of the Worthington Company, Mr. Hobart C. Ramsey, (6) Dr. Gordon Turner of the American Council of Learned Societies, (7) Mr. Frank Barnett of the Richardson Foundation and (8) Admiral John J. (Jack) Bergen USNR, Chairman of the Board of the Graham-Paige Corporation.

All of these men and organizations were extremely friendly but none of them, excepting Mr. Barnum, gave much hope. Dr. Wriston thought we might "put it over" but he doubted that the Foundations would stomach the cost of \$60,000 per year for three, possibly four years. However, Mr. Morrisett of the Carnegie Foundation said the money was not vital—the area of thought was. I shall now discuss the above in chronological order.

(1) Dr. Henry Wriston

Dr. Wriston was swell. We had a long talk and he gave me good advice and endeavored to help me even to the extent of backing me. He said that Sam Morison's opinion was worth more than Admiral Nimitz's in this case.

(2) Rockefeller Foundation

Dr. Wriston called a top official of this Foundation, who was a close friend, about doing work similar to mine and was informed "no", as it was outside their guide lines.

(3) Mr. Morrisett of the Carnegie Foundation

This gentleman, who is relatively new and relatively young, agreed to see me in the absence of Dr. James Perkins who is in Mexico for three weeks. He is a psychologist. He informed me that my work did not appear to be within the Carnegie guide lines but he would await the return of Dr. Perkins before replying. He also suggested that Foundations (a) did not like to do things like this for the government and (b) did not like to take a partly completed job. They preferred to start it and finish it. Since we had a new Washington setup, he advised we reopen the subject with the Navy to see if the CNO would agree to finish the job.

0590

(4) Mr. Robert Barnum

Mr. Barnum, who is recently made Rear Admiral USNR, was very pleasant—knew me well and suggested that I write a letter to him which I am now doing. There is some hope here!

(5) Mr. Hobart Ramsey

Mr. Ramsey, who is a classmate of mine at Annapolis and an old friend, said that his firm, Worthington Pump, had a Foundation which was used up every year largely for humane causes. He advised getting Admiral Burke's approval first on the ground that any Foundation would check on this requirement to be sure that the need was genuine.

(6) Dr. Gordon Turner

This gentleman, a former Princeton staff historian, who was for several years on the Naval War College staff in the Nimitz chair, I think, said that he had read my books—thought them quite remarkable—and would be willing to recommend me, if necessary. However, since the American Council gets its money from Foundations, they had none for me.

(7) Mr. Frank Barnett

He indicated that there was little hope in the major Foundations but there might be hope in the industry Foundations. I am, therefore, preparing letters to General Dynamics, Ford Motor Corporation, and Westinghouse among others.

(8) Rear Admiral Bergen

Admiral Bergen is all for this. So, apparently, is former Secretary Franke who was in New York and had dinner with the Admiral. Admiral Bergen also thinks that we should discover Admiral Burke's attitude. He (Bergen) is willing to help in any way to foster this project.

I had to leave New York in order to get away from the snow. We did fine here in New England with 18" in Newport but we were better prepared mentally than New York.

Your friend and mine, Mick Carney, wrote me to the effect that he did not know any of the key people in the Foundations but was ready for support and opinion if required. He further said that he could go "overboard" for this project.

I am still thinking of coming to Washington as these Foundations require time to answer. I have an idea that might work with the government since I was the Commander of the PTs and our boys are in high estate—Kennedy, Fay, etc. Best to you.

Sincerely,

Rear Admiral E. M. Eller  
Washington, D. C.

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

0591

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
February 14, 1961

Dear Mr. Barnett:

It was pleasant to have a chat with you regarding the Foundation possibility and I am following some of your advices.

I have already spoken to the Chairman of the Board of Worthington Pump and to the top people of U. S. Steel. I am planning to write also to Westinghouse, General Electric, Ford Motor Company, etc.

Because I started with you, I will endeavor to keep you informed of what luck I have. Certainly is is not as easy as was forecast in the beginning. Everyone seems quite impressed with what I have been doing—some of them knew about it and all would like to help, but it largely does not either come within their guide lines or the funds available are much smaller than required.

Sincerely,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Mr. Frank Barnett  
Director of Research  
Richardson Foundation, Inc.  
122 East 42nd Street  
New York, New York

0592

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
February 28, 1961

Dear Howard:

I got your address from your beloved Mary who seems to be in fine shape and so reported to me.

What I am writing to you about concerns this matter of the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation and my letter to them, wherein I stated that the Chief of History was anxious to complete my study of Leyte Gulf and gave the facts. I further requested that I be permitted to talk to them about it and to get their advice on procedure.

You seemed to think that was all right and so did I, however, yesterday I received a letter signed by Dana Creel in which he said he appreciated my letter and was quite friendly about it, but stated history was outside of their guide lines at present. Since the guide lines are set up by the Trustees and since your friend Lawrence Rockefeller is a Trustee, I am not going to accept this in finality until you tell me the answer is definitely no.

I am going to New York tomorrow for several days, then to Washington, D. C. on this and other matters, returning to Newport, I guess, around the middle of next week.

The Reading Room is going along slowly. They had a rather gay weekend with Van Beuren and others, but now it is fairly quiet. Perhaps you had better hurry back to give them challenge.

I don't know Mr. Harold Vanderbilt, your host, but since he has done so much for American sport and has upheld the high standards of sportsmanship, and since his name, for these reasons and others, is revered in the United States, I hope you will convey to him my hopes that all goes well at Lantana.

Best regards and thanks for your interest in my welfare and in the welfare of the Navy, as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret)

Mr. Howard G. Cushing  
c/o Mr. Harold S. Vanderbilt  
Lantana, Florida

0593

Letter from Mr. Henry M. Wriston to Mr. John N. Brown Dated January 23, 1961

Dear John:

The response to your letter of January 17th has been held up by blizzards and like episodes.

I fully understand the situation with regard to Admiral Bates. Until my heart attack I was on the Historical Advisory Board of the Army, and saw what a struggle they had in getting money to complete their enterprise. It is a shame, when five volumes are completed, not to finish the other two.

Personally, I would not be disheartened at the prospect of getting foundation help. If a group of competent historians such as Admiral Morrison, and some of the people at Princeton who know about naval history would say that the first five were well done and should be completed, I would expect one of the three great foundations, possibly four, to make a grant. For tax and other reasons, they would probably have to operate under the sponsorship of some organization such as a university or some historical society, but that is a minor matter if the major difficulty about money could be overcome.

With best regards to you and to Anne,

Sincerely,

COPY

Henry M. Wriston  
President

Mr. John Nicholas Brown  
50 South Main Street  
Providence, Rhode Island

0594

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
March 15, 1961

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

I am Rear Admiral Richard W. Bates, U.S. Navy (ret.), presently residing at Newport, Rhode Island and who, for twelve years headed the World War II Battle Evaluation Group at the Naval War College. My problem is based on the fact that this group was dissolved 31 January 1959. At this time we were analyzing the Battle for Leyte Gulf and had completed four of the planned volumes. The Chief of Naval History is very anxious to complete the remaining volumes and it is because of this that I am writing to you.

Last week I visited your foundation headquarters in New York to ascertain whether or not the foundation would be interested in an historical project which the Navy's Chief of History has put upon me.

I was promptly, and in a most friendly manner, advised to submit my whole problem in writing to you because you, who were the sole authority, were in California, and the matter would be referred to you there. And so, in accordance with this advice, I have prepared this letter which I hope will be sufficiently clear and, sufficiently stimulating to attract your attention.

And now to my problem.

In 1946, upon the suggestion of the then Secretary of the Navy, Mames Forrestal, the World War II Battle Evaluation Group was established at the Naval War College by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), for the purpose of evaluating the naval battles of World War II in which the Naval Service participated. The title, method of presentation and format were left to the judgment of the Naval War College.

I was chosen by the then President of the Naval War College (Admiral Raymond A. Spruance) to head up this battle evaluation group, and I accepted because I wished not merely to produce a narrative of these battles (although this was a lesser included objective) but, more importantly, to study command decisions and from them to derive battle lessons for guidance in future warfare. It was agreed that I would confine my evaluations to four naval battles of the Western Pacific.

Based on the CNO's directive, I developed my own analytical method which, while distinctly unique, has met with the thorough approval of all of the Presidents of the Naval War College, and also with the various Chiefs of Naval Operations. By 1950, three battles, i.e. Coral Sea, Midway and Savo Island, had been evaluated, and films made of the first two battles, while a film of the battle of Savo Island was in production. These films, which are also unique, have received outstanding approval.

0595

Also in 1950, upon the completion of the Battle for Savo Island, the Chief of Naval Operations directed that the Battle for Leyte Gulf be evaluated and suggested that I accomplish it. The President of the Naval War College therefore asked me to undertake this task. I accepted and continued to work on this battle until I retired 1 July 1958. (Actually, although retired, I worked until 31 January of 1959 at which time as mentioned earlier the section was completely dissolved. Enclosure 1 shows the reaction of the Chief of Naval Operations to this special service.)

It was my original estimate that the study of this battle would and should require a total of seven volumes — all monumental. This concept was approved by the then President of the Naval War College, Vice Admiral Lynde D. McCormick USN (Enclosure 2 shows the status of these volumes as of today. It will be observed that Volumes I, II, III and V have been completed; Volumes IV, VI, and VII have not been completed although some work has been done on Volumes VI and VII. Part of Volume IV has been included in Volume V for background. It will also be observed that it requires roughly two years plus to complete each volume once the project is fully underway).

I think that it is quite important that Volumes VI (the Battle off Samar) and VII (the Battle off Cape Engano) be completed for two major reasons. The first and foremost reason is to obtain battle lessons for future guidance; the second, is to provide in detail the true story of the battle. Certainly, one cannot obtain the former without the latter.

You may be interested in knowing why this evaluation was stopped. The Chief of Naval Operations in a letter to Admiral Richard L. Conolly (ret.), who had objected to the section's closure, stated that it was budgetary.

Recently (Spring 1960 in Berkeley, California) and later (Fall 1960) here in Newport, Rhode Island, Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, USN expressed concern over the stoppage and authorized me to use his name in any way necessary to accomplish the completion of the evaluation. Also, among many others, Robert E. Carney (former Chief of Naval Operations and presently Chairman of the Board of the Bath Iron Works) who was Commander Third Fleet (Admiral William H. Halsey's Chief of Staff in the Leyte Operation; and Rear Admiral Samuel E. Morison USNR the famous historian with whom I had most close contacts here expressed similar views.

My work in battle evaluation and my films made such a favorable impression on Admiral Conolly who, as stated hereafter, is President of Long Island University, that his University awarded me the degree of Doctor of Letters in 1957.

I have talked about this and have the complete support, I feel quite sure, at present of Dr. Henry Wriston of the American Assembly presently located at Columbia University, of Admiral Richard L. Conolly, USN (ret.), President of Long Island University and formerly President of the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island and of Rear Admiral E. M. Eller, USN, Chief of History at Washington, D. C.

0596



And so in answer to these desires and because I thoroughly believe in the importance of these analyses I am writing to you with the hope that you will be not only interested but willing to help in the completion of this project.

Yours sincerely,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Mr. Joseph P. Kennedy  
The Kennedy Foundation  
230 Park Avenue  
New York, New York

0597

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
March 20, 1961

Dear Admiral Nimitz:

Since talking to you last Spring at your home about completing my study of the Battle for Leyte Gulf, which was to be of seven volumes but unfortunately only four have been completed, I communicated with the Chief of History. He is very anxious and for the past two years has continued to be very anxious to complete this study. For this reason, all my papers have been kept in safe custody at the Naval War College. As a matter of information, it is not only you and the Chief of History that want to have these studies completed, but also Admiral Robert Carney, Admiral Richard Conolly and numerous others.

On the request of the Chief of History, for the past few months I have been writing letters to and visited <sup>in</sup> certain Foundations. So far, I have received friendly attention but history, at this time, does not seem to be on the agendas of the various Foundations. Because of this, I am trying another method which was suggested by the Richardson Foundation, i.e. to see whether the corporations had an interest. U. S. Steel has been studying my papers for at least a month and General Dynamics has been doing likewise. On the other hand, Avalon, James, Ford, Rockefeller, Rockefeller Brothers have all indicated an interest but also a regret that their guide lines, at present, are not in the field of history. As a matter of fact, these Foundations indicate that even if it were within their guide lines, the fact that the Navy started it and didn't finish it would almost surely block their help. The Carnegie Foundation said that Foundations don't like to take over something that has been started by some organization and be called upon to finish it. They much prefer to start and finish the whole thing. I \*

I am coming to California on Wednesday, the 23rd, and hope that you will be there and available to me so that I can speak to you about this and obtain your advise. It looks to me as if, in the end, we are going to finish this, it will have to be done by the Government. In fact, one top Vice Admiral said that he thought a letter from Fleet Admiral Nimitz to the new Secretary of the Navy should and would gain immediate attention. \*

When I get to the Coast, I can talk to you a great deal about all of this. I know you have a great interest in it. It was founded under your auspices and it has met generally very high approval from all of those concerned with it.

*\* typed corrections on original - tk*

0598

I certainly hope that this letter finds you and Mrs. Nimitz in fine shape and I further hope that you will be there when I get there.

I am, as ever

With warmest personal regards from an old subordinate

Yours sincerely,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz  
728 Santa Barbara Road  
Berkeley, California

0599

12 Mt. Vernon Street  
Newport, Rhode Island  
March 20, 1961

Dear Tommy:

It was a great pleasure to see you in Washington the other day, to have luncheon with you and to look over your establishment. Needless to say, it is quite a command and, if I may be brutally frank, quite a commander. May I congratulate you on your job and what you are doing.

I am enclosing herewith a copy of the paper I submitted to the Collier's Encyclopedia people on Naval Strategy. It has been approved—speaking not for publication—by Admiral Austin and Admiral Hooper, to say nothing of the Army and Air Force advisors. I hope that it meets with your critical eye.

My talks with you are always very interesting—about the prospective development in the Naval Command structure as well as what is going on in the Navy itself. I wasn't impressed with the fact that a lot of the top people were shaken by the modern method of handling forces, but since this is in accordance with the Congressional fiat of 1958, I think it has to go that way whether we like it or not.

I was sorry I missed seeing Barbara but I realized that her trip to Boston was pretty serious and I hope it has turned out all to the good.

I am going to California on Thursday, i.e. March 23rd to remain for about five weeks, at which time I will return here and take up my normal duties. Meanwhile, I am working and will expect to work on the question of finishing my books which, as you know, were stopped in the days of Admiral Ingersoll. Everybody seems friendly about it and it could be that somehow we will achieve a proper result.

Newport gives signs of being gay this summer in that, among other things, we are going to have the International Dragon Yacht Races—already the British and Australians have accepted so it could be fun.

It looks as though I am stuck with the Clambake for another year, even though I haven't fully accepted as yet. I have nothing else to report except the College seems to be doing pretty well. General Lemintzer spoke Thursday last and the Chief Inspector of the FBI the day before. I cannot say exactly whether they are following the ideas which we all worked on so long, i.e. the case problems, but they are doing something on in even though, in my mind, too minor. Once the Commander Staff class graduates of the past return

0600

to the War College—and a few of them are there now—the Naval Warfare Course will grow in quality.

With best regards and many thanks for having me to luncheon at the Army-Navy Club I am, as ever

Your old friend,

R. W. Bates  
Rear Admiral (ret.)

Rear Admiral T. H. Robbins, Jr.  
Commander, Potomac River Command  
Naval Weapons Factory  
Washington, D. C.

0601